



LIGHT YEARS SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Policy Author	Dan Tresman
Date:	1 st September 2023
Ratified by School Governor:	6 th December 2023
Review Date:	1 st September 2024

Safeguarding at Light Years School

At Light Years School, we are committed to providing an environment in which students feel safe and secure to access their education. All stakeholders are responsible for ensuring the safety and well-being of children. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all staff are encouraged to maintain an "it could happen here" attitude. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying. Light Years School are dedicated to creating a strong safeguarding culture, and that the safety and well-being of children is the central thread that embeds itself through all aspects of the school. If a person is concerned about anything they read, witness or hear with regards to the school, they should contact the school's designated safeguarding lead immediately or Headteacher. Safeguarding, and the safety and well-being of all pupils at Light Years School is carefully considered and a central theme through all school policies.

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) at Light Years School

At Light Years School, we are passionate about providing an inclusive education to children with special educational needs. We recognise and celebrate the individuality of our pupils and use personalised approaches, allowing pupils with SEND to feel supported during the school day. We strive to provide pupils with the same opportunities and experiences that pupils would have received at a mainstream school, believing passionately that in the right environment, with the right support, pupils will flourish in education. We do this by focusing on providing a SEND friendly environment, a differentiated curriculum and a strong focus on developing pupils' personal, social and emotional development. The special educational needs and disabilities of all pupils at Light Years School is carefully considered and a central theme in through all school policies. For more information, please read the school's SEND Information Report.

The **Admissions Policy** should be read in collaboration with the following policies:

Safeguarding Policy
Behaviour Policy
SEND Information Report
Special Educational Needs
Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy

Policy Aims

- To enable all stakeholder have a clear understanding of the admissions criteria and process at Light Years School.
- To ensure the safety and well-being of the school community and prospective pupils.
- To ensure the school adheres to a fair and just admissions process.

Introduction

Light Years School is situated in Fareham and is adjacent to an existing primary school. Due to its location, it is imperative that perspective pupils and their parents have a good understanding of the admissions process. Placing a child in a special school environment can be complex and challenging prospect so it is the job of this policy to ensure all stakeholders have a clear understanding of the process. Underpinning the referral process is a core ethos of placing the child at the centre of all decision making. The primary objective will always be placing the child in the right education environment for them, ensuring they receive the right support at the right time. Light Years School is registered by Ofsted and the DfE for up to **40** children.

Admissions Criteria

Light Years School will proceed with admissions should a child meet the following aspects:

Pupils will be aged between 7 (Year 3) and 11 (Year 6). Light Years School will not take secondary aged children.

Pupils will have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) and will most likely have a primary diagnosis of high functioning autism.

Light Years School will consider other special educational needs such as, but not limited to:

- a) Speech, language and communication difficulties
- b) Specific learning difficulties, for example Dyslexia
- c) Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- d) High anxiety and school refusers

Where pupils do not have a primary diagnosis of autism, careful consideration will be given to whether or not the school can meet the needs as set out in the pupil's EHCP.

In addition to this, all pupils will be able to access the national curriculum at various levels.

In all circumstances, Light Years School will complete a comprehensive assessment of need, outlined below to ensure they can meet the child's special educational needs in full.

The Referral & Admissions Process

Step 1 Referral

- The school's referral team, made up from a multi-disciplinary team, will meet and discuss the referral paperwork and check off the essential criteria.
- If the referral team believe we can meet the needs of the child, then the school will respond to the local authority within 5 working days and seek permission to access.
- When permission to access is granted, the school will move to step 2.

Step 2 Assessment

- When permission is granted, the school will liaise directly with parents to arrange a school visit and a tour of the site.
- This will be followed by the assessment stage in which the child will visit the school and take part in a typical day. The school and parents will decide on a duration of these taster days, ensuring the child's best interested in always accounted for. However, they will normally be over 1.5 / 2 consecutive days period, the week after the initial visit.
- The school will complete a referral taster day evaluation form, and this will form the basis of identifying next steps.

Step 3 Placement

- A completed referral form will be sent to the local authority offering a place and confirming we can meet the child's needs.
- In rare circumstances, the school may ask for additional paperwork, or further assessment days if they feel they are required.
- An offer form will be accepted (or not) but the local authority and the transition to Light Years School will start as soon as agreeable.

Step 4 Transition

- Once the placement has been agreed between all parties, the child will be placed on roll at the school. The school will contact parents to discuss a child-centred transition plan aimed at reducing anxiety and providing the right support for a successful transition to the school.

Working with Parents

Light Years School works closely with our parents to ensure their child is placed in the most suitable environment. We welcome parent visits to the school and these can be arranged by contacting the school office or Headteacher. However, after this process, we request that parents approach their local authority SEND case officer to explore Light Years School further. Light Years School works closely with the local authority and will not proceed with any assessment until permission has been granted by the local authority.

Local Authority Admissions Process

Parents are welcome to arrange tours and visits of the school. However, standalone parent referrals and visits do not form part of this local authority admissions process. The school will work with the Local Authority and wait for referral documentation to be sent to the school before assessment days take place. If the assessment process is successful, the local authority will name Light Years School on the pupils' EHCP.

Taking a Pupil Off Roll at the End of Year 6 – Expected Transitions

Light Years School will work in collaboration with parents and the local authority to secure a suitable education placement at the end of Year 6. We will work together to ensure a smooth transition from Light Years school and beyond. The school will work alongside SEND Case Officers to ensure a suitable secondary placement is secured.

Taking a Pupil Off Roll During Year 3 to Year 6 – Unexpected Transitions

In the unlikely event of a pupil being taken off roll before their year 6 transition date, this will be done in conjunction with parents and the local authority. This will follow an emergency annual review, where the school and other stakeholders will explore all reasonable adjustments. Light Years School will work closely with the Local Authority to ensure the child's transition to a new educational placement is successful during this process. If Light Years School may serve notice on a child's placement, should they feel they can no longer meet their special educational needs or if the child's needs change to the point where it is no longer in their best interest to attend. At the core of every decision of this nature will be the school's mantra of 'what is in the child's best interest'. A decision to serve notice on a placement should be done within the following guided timescales:

- a) High Priority: Within a 4-6 week period of the Emergency Annual Review
- b) Medium Priority: Within a 6 – 10 week period of the Emergency Annual Review
- c) Low Priority: 10 weeks or longer period of the Emergency Annual Review

Definitions:

High Priority: This scenario is likely to be in the circumstance where a child's needs can no longer be met safely in school but without the need for an immediate permanent exclusion. This is likely to involve a bespoke timetable during the 4-6 week period to support the safety and well-being of all children whilst working alongside the local authority to identify an alternative educational setting.

Medium Priority: This scenario is likely to be in the circumstance where a child's needs have changed significantly or presenting differently to the extent where the school can no longer meet their special educational needs but not immediately. In this circumstance, the school will make every effort to work in collaboration with the local authority to seek an alternative educational setting or support package.

Low Priority: This scenario is likely to be in the circumstance where the school, parent or local authority identify a longer-term issue with the educational environment or placement that would result in a child's special educational needs no longer being met in full.

In all scenarios, the child's best interest will be at the centre of the decision-making process.

Light Years School will always work within the legal framework of the following reasons why our school can longer meet need.

- The child's SEND needs are not appropriate or no longer appropriate for the profile of the school.
- The attendance of the child is incompatible or no longer compatible with the efficient education of others.
- The attendance of the child is incompatible or no longer compatible with the efficient use of resources.

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every year by the Headteacher and ratified by the Chair of Governors to ensure it is a true reflection on current admissions process.